GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3171
ANSWERED ON:23.03.2005
SYNTHETIC DYES IN FOOD ITEMS
Adhalrao Patil Shri Shivaji

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether food items prepared in India and exported have been found to be contaminated due to use of synthetic dyes;

(b) if so, whether Indian food items have received a setback in European countries; and

(c) if so, the number of consignments held due to contamination;

(d) whether trade experts have demanded enforcing a nationwide ban on manufacture and sale of unregistered pesticides which are being used in Indian food items ; and

(e) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE (SMT. PANABAKA LAKSHMI)

(a) to (c): The Rapid Alert Notifications issued by the European Union in May/June 2003 reported presence of Sudan dye in chilli powder exported from India. Recently in February 2005, Food Standards Authority (FSA), UK had claimed that it had detected presence of Sudan 1, a carcinogenic dye in the chilli powder reportedly exported from India in the year 2002. Consequently, the FSA had recalled the total of 575 products contaminated with Sudan 1 dye.

Rapid Alert, however, does not necessarily mean that a consignment is held up at the point of entry into the country. Since 10th March 2005, exporters are to present a certificate from spices Board to the effect that the consignment is free from Sudan I-IV to clear exports.

The Sudan 1 controversy did not have any impact on Indian chilli exports to EU countries or elsewhere as is evident from the consistent increase in exports of chilli from India. The data for exports of chilli is as under:

	Indian Exports to EU	Total Indian Exports
Year	Quantity (Tones)	Quantity (Tones)
2001-02	4456	69998
2002-03	4738	81022
2003-04	5240	81500
2004-05 (April-Jan)	5177	114000

(d)&(e): Manufacture and sale of pesticides without registration and relevant licence is a punishable offence under the Insecticides Act, 1968 and as such use of unregistered pesticides in agriculture is already banned.